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ISSUE 97 | July 2012

SUCCESS FOR SWAP SHOP!

Mums and staff at The Children's Centre with their wardrobe updates after the clothes swap.

FASHION conscious mums from across the Leys got together to take part in the first ever clothes swap event at The Children's Centre in Cuddesdon Corner.

Organised by Valerie O'Malley and Teresa Fieldwick, parents were invited to bring five items of clothing or accessories to the event and swap them for some new items to give their wardrobes a summer facelift-for free.

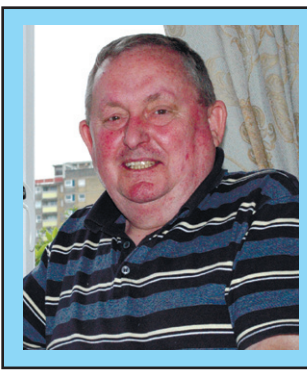
Teresa said: "We got the idea from a friend when we went to her swap party and thought it would work brilliantly here on the Leys. It's a great way to update your wardrobe for free and re-home some of your unwanted clothes that are cluttering up your house."

LOTS OF FUN

Valerie added that the event may well become a regular fixture. She said: "Everyone has had a great time. It has been a lot of fun and most importantly it hasn't cost anyone a penny. One of our aims here at the Children's Centre is to help people achieve economic wellbeing and this has definitely worked well. Buying new clothes all the time is difficult for a lot of people at the moment and we are pleased to be able to lend a hand. So many of us have so many things in our wardrobe that we don't wear, it is much better to give them a new home and pass them on to someone who can make good use of them."

Valerie added that the swap event is just one of the ways that the centre encourages people to meet other parents. She said: "It is very important for parents to have something that is not just about the children, and this kind of event is a great example of that. It gives parents the chance to meet and talk about any problems they may have and it always helps to know that you are not the only one who finds parenting difficult."

Following the success of the first event, there are plans to hold a children's clothes swap event in the near future.



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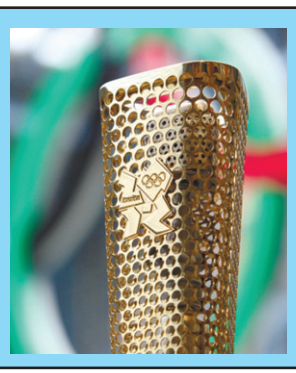
A right royal kness up!

The Grebe Close Street Party, page 7



The Olympics comes to the Leys!

Don't miss it – see backpage

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Leys News
Issue 97
JULY 2012

Leys News is a not-for-profit business dedicated to providing news and information to the whole community. We are not affiliated to any political party, and we operate an equal opportunities policy. We encourage any resident to get involved in our work.

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Printed by Newbury Weekly News (Printers) Ltd, Newspaper House, Faraday Road, Newbury, Berkshire. RG14 2DW

ISSN 2046-2948

LEYS NEWS acknowledges financial assistance from: Catalyst Communities Housing Association, Oxford Citizens Housing Association, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford City Council and the Wates Foundation.

Leys News is a company limited by guarantee No. 3591512

MORE PEOPLE FACING DEBT

THE number of people living on the Leys seeking advice about how to manage their debts has increased.

Laura Wilson, the Deputy Manager at The Agnes Smith Advice Centre says more people are contacting the service for help and advice about how to deal with their money problems.

The news follows national research that shows individual or personal debt has generally decreased but the number of people seeking advice about debt has grown.

Laura, who has worked at the centre for 13 years, said she has seen a big increase in debt problems in that time. "When I first started working here I was giving a lot of advice about benefits, but now we give a lot of debt management advice. People end up with financial difficulties for all sorts of reasons. Relationship breakdowns, unemployment and cuts or loss of benefits all have an impact. We are very busy at the moment with people calling in to see us for advice."

Laura added that people often see the centre as a last resort. "We would urge people to contact us sooner rather than later and not to leave things until they get really difficult to manage.

Debt affects all kinds of people of all ages, nationalities and backgrounds and we are always here to try and help everyone as much as we can."

The team at The Agnes Smith Advice Centre help by organising budget planning and contacting creditors to make payment arrangements.

Laura added: "People tend to be grateful for our advice and react and respond quickly once they have been to see us. In some cases people have been irresponsible with money but for most people it's just a situation that has happened such as losing a job or having their benefits reduced. The Leys is a big estate and there are debt problems here."

Laura Wilson, Deputy Manager at The Agnes Smith Advice Centre

The Agnes Smith Advice Centre is open from 10am–1pm and 2–5pm. It closes at 1pm on Fridays.

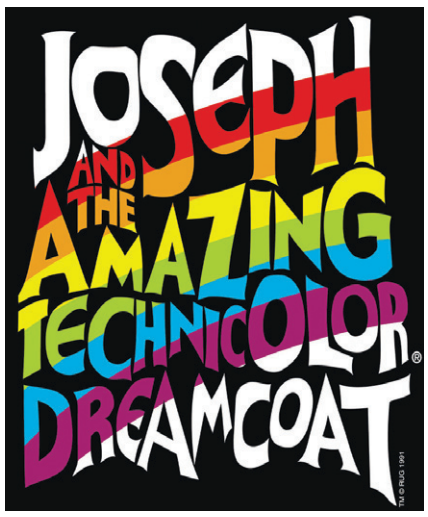
PLANS FOR PRODUCTION GATHERING PACE

PLANS for a major theatrical production on the Leys are gathering speed, and already some funding support has started rolling in.

Following a community meeting in June, auditions for Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat will be held in September and the production will take to the stage next February.

Sasha East from Catalyst Housing, said: "We have already had lots of offers of support and interest from people who would like to take part in the production. It is great that people are already supporting the project."

Organisers are keen for people of all ages and abilities to get involved. As well as performing in the production, it will be all hands on deck for backstage work, selling tickets and designing scenery.



Another meeting is planned for Monday 16 July, 6.30pm at the Church of the Holy Family. More details are available by calling 0791 770 4320

Letter from the Editor

Hello!

Well here we are again. Almost time for the summer holidays to start!

With exams out of the way and hopefully several weeks of sunny weather to look forward to, the stress levels in our house have certainly plummeted over the last few days!

So how are you going to keep your family happy and entertained over the summer break? If you are planning to spend some time at home then check out the ideas in the centre pages for how to make your garden a bright and inviting venue for some summer entertaining. And if you are planning a break then take a look at Natalie Wallace's top tips for keeping your feet sweet and sweat-free with the latest products and some cool summer sandals.

Across the Leys there are dozens of community projects and organisations providing amazing resources for residents. To make sure everyone knows about YOUR project or group it is vital that you contact Brian Lester at Leysonline so that he can add your details onto the community website. You can read more about this on page 3.

With the Olympic torch coming this way very soon it's going to be an exciting time for the Leys. If you manage to take any photos of the event then please send them in for our next issue. Have a great month!

Best wishes

Sarah

The next EDITORIAL MEETING will be held on Tuesday 3 July at 10.30am at the Leys News office.

BLOGGER NEEDED!

Are you a Leys resident and a keen blogger? Leys News is looking for a new member of our volunteer community journalism team to write a weekly blog about life on the Leys for our website.

If you are interested please email a 250 word blog entry about why you like living on the Leys to editor@leysnews.co.uk

SUBMISSIONS

Leys News welcomes submissions and ideas for articles and photographs from all sectors of the community. If you would like to send us a press release about your community project please email it to editor@leysnews.co.uk and we will consider it for publication in a future issue.

Please note: do not embed photos and logos into word documents but sent send them as separate picture files.

The next issue of Leys News will be delivered on Saturday 28 July and the deadline for advertising and editorial copy is 15 July.

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GET ONLINE AND GET NOTICED!

Leys Webmaster Brian Lester

COMMUNITY groups across the Leys are being urged to get online and get themselves noticed on a dedicated website.

Brian Lester who runs Leysonline, says the facility is under used and needs to be supported by the local community that it was created for.

He said: "I am very involved with the website and I am amazed that it is not used more by local groups. There are so many things happening here on the Leys and the website offers free publicity for everyone so it seems strange that groups are not getting in touch with me to publicise the great work they are doing."

Leysonline was relaunched about two years ago and Brian works tirelessly as a volunteer to keep the site updated and ensure that it provides a comprehensive information service for the estate.

He added: "I am happy to be involved with the website and I love it. I try to update it every day with snippets of news and announcements and notices about things that are happening but I really need more people to support it by getting in touch and letting me know what they are up to."

Groups and projects including schools, sports clubs and youth and social clubs can all post information about their organisations, including requests for support and volunteers. Blackbird Leys Parish Council has recently given the website a small grant to develop it further and make some improvements.

Brian added: "Leysonline is completely free and we welcome contributions of information from all groups. It is vital that we keep the site as up to date as possible and as packed with useful information as we can so it is really important for local groups to get in touch and add their details to the site. There is nothing worse than an out of date website and I want Leysonline to provide as much information as possible to people who live here on the Leys."

To contact Leysonline and ask for their information to be included, community groups should visit www.leysonline.net and click the contact us button.

Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground

Jubilee celebrations for Blap

BLAP celebrated its Jubilee afternoon with many families braving the rain to enjoy delicious cream teas and its indoor games facilities. Although the five a side football competition was rained off the children enjoyed creating their Union Jack flag from card and coloured cellophane. The flag will be used for their next family event when the Olympic torch passes the playground on Monday 9 July.

The adventure playground after school club will start at 2pm on 9 July so that children can come straight from school to make their own replica torches and then take part in a round Britain torch race on Orchard Meadow field.

Parents and other members of the public will be at the playground from 5pm when there will be music, BBQ and refreshments as crowds wait in anticipation for the moment the torch is carried aloft down Cuddesdon Way.

AGM

BLAP holds its AGM on Monday 16 July at 7pm in the BLAP building (entrance on Cuddesdon Way or by the gate next to the swimming pool in Blackbird Leys Road). Please come and hear how BLAP has been given a new lease of life thanks to so many people from the Leys. Please consider standing for the Committee or become a supporter of BLAP in other ways.

SUMMER PLAYSCHEME

From 30 July to 24 August the BLAP Summer Play scheme runs for 8–13 year olds every weekday from 10am to 4pm with a daily charge of £4.00 (except for the outings day when the charge will be higher). Users can bring their own pack-lunches or be collected for their lunch break. Children will have opportunities to enjoy various activities and sports.

More information call Alston Quammie 07530 933690 or Sue Price 07773 848998 sueprice.blap@virginmedia.com

SUMMER CHALLENGE FOR TEENAGERS

AN exciting project for teenagers will take place in Oxfordshire this summer. The Summer Challenge is open to anyone who will be 16 or 17 by 31 August. There are 105 places available across the county.

The challege is part of the National Citizen Service programme, and is free to all participants. It offers exciting and challenging experiences and is designed to bring out the best in participants who will get to learn new skills, make new friends and support their local community while having lots of fun.

National Citizen Service is a government initiative which aims to promote a more cohesive, responsible and engaged society by bringing young people from different backgrounds together to make a difference in their communities.

It is a voluntary programme which focuses on personal and social development which includes challenging activities, from away-from-home residential experiences to a self designed social action project.

For more information speak to staff at Littlemore Early Intervention Hub on 01865 816202

Local Neighbourhood Police Team

Neighbourhood policing tackles anti-social behaviour

The Leys Neighbourhood Policing Team is investigating reports of several teenagers causing issues around Honeysuckle Close after a PCSO was almost run over by a motorcyclist.

Police have stopped several motorcyclists on the estate including one in Little Bury who had a close shave with a PCSO.

PCSO Barry Sheehan said: "Members of the team are working closely with the resident and some of our partner agencies to help diminish these incidents and dealing with the teenagers appropriately. Residents have contacted Thames Valley Police in relation to persons riding a motorcycle along footpaths in Brooklime Walk and Tern Walk. The neighbourhood team has increased patrols in the area and have so far caught three riders who have all been served a Section 59 notice."

He added: "There are two other riders we are looking out for. We hope that this great result will urge these individuals and others to reconsider riding through this area on their motorcycles. The team will continue with patrols in the area and look at other preventative actions. The team has also issued a further two Section 59 warnings to individuals on the estate. One was for riding on pathways in Little Bury and almost running over a PCSO and the other was for a man riding a mini moto style bike in and around Gillians Park. Both these men seemed to like their bikes so it is hoped that they will now abide by the Road Traffic regulations and not cause alarm to anyone else. The team also seized a moped from a man who was disqualified and the moped was uninsured with no MOT or tax."

Beggars

Thames Valley Police are currently working with partner agencies to deal robustly with two persistent beggars on the estate. Their behaviour has become more harassment than begging. PCSO Barry Sheehan said: "We are looking at longer term solutions around exclusions and Behaviour Contracts. If any resident is approached by anyone begging on the estate please call on 101."

Drugs arrest

A man was arrested for possession with intent to supply class 'A' drugs in Blackbird Leys after trying to hide his drugs in the Leisure Centre. He is currently on bail to appear in court in the coming month.

The neighbourhood policing team is currently building up information on the drug activity around the estate. PCSO Barry Sheehan said: "Due to all the previous hard work it is evident that this activity has moved around and we are continuing with the proactive approach to disrupt and reduce the effect of this neighbourhood priority. "We are also working with our partner agencies to engage with youths who are vulnerable and likely to be captured and embroiled by the drug culture and lured into running the drugs for dealers. We hope this will show them that there is life out of this dark circle and opportunities more fulfilling with prospects for their future."

The Neighbourhood team asks any residents who have any information or suspect an individual, a group or a property to be involved in some form of drugs offences to please contact the neighbourhood team on the below number or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

PCSO Sheehan added: "Sometimes it's that one little piece of information that can make a difference. If you see it, if it annoys you or if you sit there and think why do they get away with it, report it to us don't just think nothing can be done or they won't do anything. Make that call, you could provide us with the crucial information needed."

Burglary

A burglary occurred in Little Bury, Blackbird Leys on Sunday 20 May between 9am and 8pm. The offender gained entry through an insecure window at the rear of the property and a Laptop, a TV and a Games console were stolen.

If you saw or heard anything suspicious which could assist the police with their investigation please contact the Non Emergency number 101 and leave a message for the Oxford Burglary team.

Woman charged with Burglary in Blackbird Leys

A woman aged 42 from Cowley, was charged with one count of burglary on 14 May and kept in custody overnight and appeared at Oxford Magistrates' Court on 15 May. The charge was in relation to a burglary at a house in Blackbird Leys, between 2.30pm and 3.30pm on 14 May, where the woman visited the house and asked to use the toilet, before allegedly stealing a purse containing cash and bank cards.

Thames Valley Alert

Thames Valley Alert is the new system for receiving crime and policing updates for your area.

It allows anyone who signs up to choose what updates they receive and how they would like to receive them.

A new option includes receiving information via tex. You can also filter the updates you receive by specifying the priority level of the messages you receive.

To sign up to receive alerts visit www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk

CONTACT

To contact the neighbourhood team call the police non emergency number 101 but if your call is an emergency then dial 999.

You can also email us at: Leysneighbourhood@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
(please note this email address cannot be used to contact Thames Valley Police to report crimes or for any urgent matters.)

If you have information about crime or Anti Social Behaviour in your area but you do not want to speak to the police, please call the Crimestoppers charity on 0800 555111.

To view information on the team you can visit the force website at: www.thamesvalley.police.uk

You can also follow the neighbourhood team on Twitter: twitter.com/tvp_bbleys

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JOIN THE CLANGERS AT THE CLOCKHOUSE!

RESIDENTS on the Leys are enjoying their regular social events at The Clockhouse and would like more people to join their group. The CLANG (Clockhouse Activity Nights Group) launched earlier this year, and holds evening socials from 7.00–9.00pm on the last Wednesday of the month at the Clockhouse. The cost of the evening is £2 including light refreshments. Adults of all ages are very welcome to these friendly sessions that give everyone a chance to relax after a busy day and meet other people from the local community. The group has held a very popular quiz night, and a board games evening. Why not join the CLANGers and give it a try? For more information ring 01865 395908 or 07722 232 109.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Pat Lemke, Veronica Hastie, Eulina Maloney and Edith Hodson enjoying a chat and a laugh at CLANG (the Clockhouse Activity Nights Group).

HELP FOR HOME OWNERS

THE Oxford Home Improvement Agency is a service which offers invaluable support to a wide range of people living in Oxford City, both homeowners and tenants, including those on a low income; older people or individuals with disabilities or a long term health condition.

Its purpose is to enable people to remain safe, secure, and comfortable in their own homes, thereby promoting independence, reducing the need for residential care and hospital admissions, and improving quality of life.

The services offered are:

- Disabled Facilities Grant: A means-tested grant available to people who have a disability to pay for major adaptations or improvements, such as the installation of low level access showers and stairlifts
- Essential Repairs Grant: A means-tested grant to enable home owners on low income to have essential repairs made to their home.
- Flexible Home Improvement Loan: A loan scheme for owner-occupiers over 60, which is designed to help pay for works to improve the comfort, safety, security and repair in your home.
- Small Repairs Service: The Small Repairs service is a scheme to help with various small jobs that need completing within the home it covers home safety, security, key safes, minor electrical works, minor plumbing works and other general repairs. There is a small hourly charge for this service.

For more information please contact a member of the HIA Team on 01865 249811 or on environment@oxford.gov.uk .

Brownies are science investigators!

A GROUP of 17 brownies completed their Science Investigator badge with help from teachers at The Oxford Academy. The 1st Blackbird Leys Brownies visited the science labs twice to carry out experiments and see some demonstrations including finding out how digestion works and learning about the magical properties of elephant toothpaste.

In order to be awarded with the badge, the brownies needed to conduct three experiments and find out about the discoveries of two scientists and how their work affects our lives.

The experiments included growing salt crystals, making a balloon rocket and a chromatography based activity. Academy Science teachers, Simon McEvoy and Nick Bowater ran the event.

Simon said: “The practicals were probably more advanced than those listed in the badge requirements”.

One of the Brownies said: “I enjoyed making the crystals with the different powders, also when the man burnt the different powders and made different flames. It was very interesting at the Academy and I enjoyed going there.”

Seven-year-old brownie, Khadijha, said: “When I heard we were going to be doing experiments I knew it was going to be really fun because I like science at school and I’d like to be a scientist when I grow up. In the photo I am holding a test tube with magnesium and acid. When they mix, they give off a gas called hydrogen and the teacher made it pop by lighting the gas.

“Another experiment we did was making

elephant toothpaste by mixing two other chemicals with washing up liquid. It bubbled up the tube so it looked like a giant tube of toothpaste!”

Brownie leader, Jennifer Pleass added: “When I contacted our local Academy they were very enthusiastic about helping the girls. It was great to be able to try some exciting activities that we would not be able to do in our usual meeting place, and to show them a new side to science—most of the girls said they were no good at science when we first arrived”.

This was the second visit to the Academy for the Brownies, who previously watched a pantomime put on by another Brownie leader’s drama group in the Academy’s Beecroft theatre.

GREEN FINGERS

By Stuart Mabbutt

Can man and wildlife live side by side? – our findings

CAN man and wildlife live side by side, that’s what I asked in my last article and said that I would be exploring in June.

My company was sponsoring the Sunningwell Festival which had its main stage constructed within the village pond. We recorded some material for our wildlife radio programme Going Wild with Wildlife, on Radio Cherwell, which explored whether man and wildlife could actually live side by side if it wanted to.

As I said in my last article I feel that although gardens and streets are manmade, so is the countryside. What we see as countryside is a product of thousands of years of farming and management. Having said that, if we manage it wisely wildlife will still come.

Our findings were, that the festival did not have too much of a detrimental effect on the wildlife, perhaps in some areas it had a positive effect.

Mallards happily raised two young, and festival goers could almost see the juveniles grow day by day. The Moorhens also continued to raise their young, often spending much of their time under the stage.

Bats too had a feeding frenzy during the performances. Lights attracted moths which the bats happily hoovered up. At times, it was raining moth wings as the bats discarded what they didn’t eat.

Lots of erosion occurred on the grass areas around the pond. The bare earth is now great for basking dragonflies, ground nesting bees and House Martins who need wet mud to build and repair their nests.

It was interesting to hear what people assume wildlife gardening means during our involvement. Some feel its doing nothing and letting the wildlife fend for itself, others think it’s just about wildflowers and never weeding. Our job was to educate people into realising it’s more about growing lots of different things and just not letting anything dominate. The choice of plants is up to you, it’s the variety of types that matters.

Happy Gardening

DON'T PASS THE BUCK

Your rubbish is your responsibility

If you pay someone to remove your rubbish, ensure:

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Oxfordshire County Council www.oxfordshire.gov.uk Working for you

South Oxfordshire District Council Listening Learning Leading

Vale of White Horse District Council

West Oxfordshire District Council

A RIGHT ROYAL KNEES UP!

FRIENDS and neighbours from Grebe Close got together to enjoy the Jubilee celebrations with a street party. Neighbours were out in force to mark the special occasion with a bring and share Jubilee buffet, and were among many residents and community groups from across Blackbird and Greater Leys who held street party celebrations to take advantage of the extended bank holiday weekend.

Volunteer and make a difference

A NEW organisation that supports people who are nearing the end of their life has made an urgent plea for volunteers. Oxford Befriending at End of Life (OxBEL) recruits and trains volunteers to befriend people who are facing the end of life and may be isolated and alone or just need someone to talk to.

Volunteer Coordinator Joan Gardner said: "We are seeking volunteers for the next training course which starts in Oxford soon. We urgently need more volunteers as demand is growing for our services. We offer top quality training, regular one-to-one support, bi-monthly peer support groups that are well-attended as our volunteers get a lot out of connecting with one another, and the opportunity to really make a difference to someone's life."

Joan added: "The befriending relationship will also enrich the life of the volunteer. It isn't all about serious stuff. Part of preparing to die well involves living life well, and to the full, now. There can be fun and laughter as well as serious conversations. It can come as a surprise to some current volunteers just how rewarding the role turns out to be. Every friendship is unique."

The group is particularly keen to hear from anyone who has cared for a loved one who died, retired care professionals or anyone who hopes to have a career in care."

Joan added: "Or are you 'just' a special person who wants to help others? The lessons you have learnt and your experience and knowledge could make a real difference. Please volunteer to become a befriender."

For more info about Oxford Befriending at End of Life call 01865 791781 or email enquiries@oxonbefriending.net

METAL THEFT

EIGHT men appeared at Oxford Crown Court on 21 May and were sentenced to a total of 14 years three months for stealing copper cabling worth over £8,000.

This was as a result of police being called at 1.19am on Sunday 1 April, by a person remotely monitoring the site at Blackberry Lane, Blackbird Leys to say he could see suspicious people in the site.

Patrol officers were immediately dispatched, alongside officers from the Dog Section and the Chiltern Air Support Unit (CASU).

The CASU guided all three dog officers to the three separate locations where the men were hiding and they were subsequently arrested.

Praise for Olympic day from primary students

THE Oxford Academy welcomed primary school, Orchard Meadow Primary School, to its third Olympic Day. This was part of a series of events to mark the build up to London 2012.

Miss Robinson and colleagues combined the Olympics with the curriculum to create four fun workshops for the Year 5 pupils.

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PET HATES

BY ALAN WITTON

What the ?*!# are you talking about?

Am I really the only person (I sincerely hope not) who gets upset when people use the f-word or other bad language in public?

I had to hear it three times in a few minutes the day I wrote this. On a bus ride from Greater Leys to Littlemore, a middle-aged lady got on the bus and her mobile phone rang shortly afterwards (another of my Pet Hates, as regular readers will remember). All that could be heard was "I'm on the bus, I can't hear you, f*** off". Quite unnecessary, I think you would agree. If you don't want to receive calls during a bus journey, all you have to do is switch the b***** thing off! And that's swearing. Then a few minutes later the bus driver had a bad-natured conversation with a motorist coming the other way in a narrow stretch of road. I don't know the rights and wrongs of the situation, but the motorist flung the f-word at the bus driver rather more times than was strictly necessary. (Strictly necessary, in this context and in my humble opinion, is never).

Maybe the frequency of f-word usage is tied in with the climate (hot, muggy and getting ready for a thunderstorm on the day I wrote this). Or maybe the people concerned had no such facile excuse.

CONFESSION

I have to confess that I have, on rare occasions, given vent to really foul language in public. One of the last occasions was when our train missed a connection into an expensive and long-awaited rail tour, despite the railway staff at Oxford having promised to hold the train for us. That called forth a tirade which probably nearly got me arrested, quite apart from coming within a whisker of bringing a beautiful relationship to an end. My dear lady friend had never suspected I had such a fluent command of soldier's language, especially as I hardly ever use it.

In the famous novel To Kill a Mockingbird set in a small town in Alabama at the height of the Depression, a group of ne'er-do-wells are arrested for a string of offences of which the last was using offensive language in the presence of a female! When the magistrate asks the arresting officer why the last item was included, he gets the reply that "they cussed so loud every lady in Maycomb must've heard them!" Now I don't believe we need new laws against swearing on the lines of this Alabama bye-law. In any case, I have as much right, as a man, to have my ears protected against foul language as any Southern belle in Alabama. And, if the police really want to proceed against users of bad language, the charge of offensive behaviour should do the trick.

I don't know in any case why we have to use an Anglo-Saxon word which properly relates to the sex act, as a completely empty adjective to render our conversation more, well something or other, to our hearers. To listen to some people talk, you would think that f***ing was the only adjective they knew, or at least the only one they were willing to use regularly. Which makes you wonder how many words they remember out of the tens of thousands they learnt in the home and at school. It's really a sign of ignorance to make every adjective a swear-word.

Shakespeare put swear-words in the mouths of his characters when the occasion demanded it—so did Dickens. But both these authors, and many others, demonstrated an extraordinary mastery of the whole rich tapestry of the English language—and put a few choice non-swearwords into our language which we have used ever since.

My grandmother, who had had a fairly straitlaced Presbyterian upbringing, specialised in spitting out impressive but totally fictitious swearwords when the occasion demanded! When you heard her say "Blidge!" very loudly, you suspected the world might be coming to an end! And all who heard that word, including my grandfather, quaked in their boots. So why not use a completely meaningless made-up series of words to spice up our language? "My ponduliferous mother-in-law has smashed up the blidgified Audi in the banderoony car park!" could be expressed with just as much fire and brimstone as any number of f-words, and would sound much more satisfying to boot! That's if you like the idea of booting a ponduliferous mother-in-law.

GET BRIGHT OUTDOORS!

IT'S TIME to dust off the deckchairs and pretty up your pots ready for (hopefully!) some sunny weather and a chance to enjoy your garden.

The weather may be a bit unpredictable but with the trend for staycationing still pretty high on the holiday agenda, there really is no place like home this summer.

If your outdoor space is looking less than inviting then now is the time to plan a few small changes that, when the sun does finally shine, will mean that your garden is ready for picnics, parties and some serious relaxation.

With a bit of weeding, lawn mowing and the odd lick of paint, even the smallest garden can quickly be transformed into a little haven of peace and quiet or a safe and inviting play area for children to enjoy.

With many people on a tight budget, spending money on your garden may be low down your list of priorities, but we have taken the hard work out of hitting the high street for you and come up with a few colourful ideas that will certainly not break the bank.

For an instant facelift add a few tea lanterns like this one from Sainsbury's (2). At just £4 each these are a great way to add interest and provide some safe and ambient lighting on a warm summer's evening. If you use citronella candles you will also ensure a bug free alfresco experience.

Colourful plant pots are a cheap and cheerful way to bring a dark, dreary corner or unloved patio to life. These ones from Wilkinsons are 52p (6) each and come in a variety of different colours. Group together and plant up with vibrant plants such as geraniums or petunias to make a great gardening statement.

If your garden furniture has seen better days then check out some inexpensive but perfectly comfortable folding chairs. This orange one from Wilkinsons is £10 and ideal if you are short of space (5).

WILDLIFE IN THE GARDEN

If you are keen to attract some wildlife into your garden then make sure you check out our regular Green fingers column by Stuart Mabbutt for expert advice. You could also think about adding a ladybird or bee house like this one from Sainsbury's at £6 (8). Even if they don't become instant homes for garden visitors they look great hanging in trees or from a wall.

The school summer holidays can be a tricky time to keep your little ones occupied, so if you have room in the garden why not give them a small patch that they can look after. Packets of seeds can be bought quite cheaply and with a bit of love and attention who knows what might emerge from the soil!

Even if nothing grows at all, children love water and mud and will spend many happy hours digging. It is also a great opportunity for them to learn more about the natural world, how plants grow and who knows it might be the start of a keen interest in gardening!

Another way to keep your children interested in the garden and encourage them to spend time outdoors is to organise simple treasure hunts, surveys of different types of flowers, plants, birds and insects, and of course–a picnic!

PICNIC

If you are planning to stay at home this summer and spending your hard earned cash on activity days and day trips is not an option, then a picnic is the perfect way to spend an afternoon. If you have a play sand pits in your garden and a paddling pool then so much the better!

Plan your picnic the day before and decide what food and treats you are going to include. A good picnic rug is essential and can be picked up relatively cheaply, Littlewoods have this one in a bright and cheerful disco stripe-guaranteed to liven up any lawn or patio.

Tiffin boxes are also great fun as you can layer different treats in them. This one is also from Littlewoods (7). A picnic basket or bag is another picnic-must have and this one from Debenhams is by Matthew Williamson (3). At £24 it may not be that cheap but it is roomy enough for a decent picnic lunch and if you are staying at home this summer it will be very useful.

Sainsbury's also have a range of excellent picnic wear. The range includes ice lolly makers and making your own ices is a fun and almost free way to cool down on a sunny day.

When the sun goes down why not light up your garden with a string of party lights. These solar powered ones (1) are from Matalan and cost £8.

Start thinking about how you can brighten up your outdoor space without it costing a fortune, and who knows…the sun may even actually decide to shine for a while!

7

8

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Fashion on the Leys
with Natalie Wallace

GET YOUR TOES TWINKLING READY FOR SUMMER!

BY NATALIE WALLACE

I HEAR that the sun actually came out for a split second and I thought it must be about time I removed my feet from the woolly bed socks they've been all snug and cosy in and give them some much needed airing. Out come the toes and on closer inspection...eek. Cracked heels, dry soles and no nail polish hence some much needed TLC before daring to bare in strappy sandals.

Swedish beauty products have a reputation for luxury and top quality organic cosmetics which usually means they come with a price tag to match. Oriflame offers a whole range of Swedish beauty care at an extremely low cost.

The Feet Up summer range in Aromatic Summer has it all covered with a foot file, scrub, cream and cooling foot spray available in the same range. They'll also look fab on your bathroom shelf or in your holiday wash bag. Described as Neroli and Frangipani scented (no me neither), the products have a fresh and light smell which differs from the usual peppermint foot lotions.

The scrub consists of hard, gritty salt like particles which makes it perfect for banishing tough, dry skin on the soles of the feet. Follow with the foot cream which is thick enough to keep feet soft and smooth.

Lastly, my favourite, the foot spray. Spritz some cooling foot spray to finish off your home pedicure for a luxurious treat. This feels so fresh and cooling on the skin, I'll be keeping it as a handbag staple for those swelteringly hot and uncomfortable davs.

Each product is under £4.

To buy Oriflame you'll need to go online and find your nearest consultant as you can't buy this stuff in the shops and you won't find any advertising. It's all about network marketing which means the products sell purely by word of mouth. Not a risky move for a brand that has complete confidence in its goods.

So, now I'm ready to shop. Flats are the only sane way to go when it's a scorcher outside and there are plenty of styles to choose from whether you like flirty, girly styles or no frills, utility designs that will suit day or night time occasions. The pink flower detail flip flops are just £7.99 from Shoe Zone (*top left*). For extra comfort, head to Next where the sandals have a cushioned inner sole and slight heel which means your feet will be well supported (*bottom*). The silver strap on these will look amazing on tanned tootsies.

Simplicity is always chic. For a no fuss summer essential Internacionalé has these yellow bow detail flats for less than a tenner, perfect to add an injection of colour into any summer outfit (*middle right*).

If you're still all over the tribal trend, Primark has these to add to your collection for £10 (*middle left*). The bead detail with earthy tones on the snakeskin pattern will look great with either denim shorts or a floaty sun dress.

Personally, I like a little height in my footwear but when the sun shines, and I hear it will do again at some point, comfort is key. Hello Florence and Fred at Tesco, look at the goodies you have for me. The canvas espadrille platform will have you walking tall and the wedge style isn't likely to leave you with any aches or pains.

Windale School

Summer Holiday Funweeks

(in partnership with JSC)

Monday 23 July to Friday 17 August / 9am–3pm
Windale Community Primary School, OX4 6JD
The Programme is managed by former
Oxford City Council "Street Sports Co-ordinator"

JASON S. CARBON & Funweeks Squad

Rachel, Jake, Leah, Kayleigh and Jamie currently teach PE at Windale Community Primary School
(JSC staff are qualified 1st Aiders
and hold Enhanced CRB Certificates)

ABC Funweek is for children aged 8 to 11 years

- MINI OLYMPICS
- ART ~ BALANCE ~ CULTURE
- MUSIC & DANCE SESSIONS
- MULTI-SPORTS ACTIVITIES

£35 per child per week or £9.50 per day
(Includes breakfast. Please add £2 per day
if your require lunch.)

For further details contact Windale School PA
Christine Wenborn on **01865 777796**
Email: **cwen3553@windale.ocnmail.net**

Jason S. Carbon
Tweet: @jsc4kidscom www.jsc4kids.com

THE TETCHY TEEN

Exam stress is starting to catch up with our The Tetchy Teen, as Ross Arrowsmith works his way through those dreaded exams and also realises that being 16 does have some disadvantages!

IT IS that time of the year for me—those dreaded exams. The word 'hello' might as well be changed into 'revision', and the teachers might need to seek some anger management classes.

Of course, most of it is a lie. In all honesty, holding my hands up high, I haven't done as much revision as I really should be doing—but then again, whoever does?

It is Rosstifically (my official new word) proven that your chances of success in an exam will improve by 90 per cent if you walk into an exam not worrying, calm and feeling no stress. Many other kids and teenagers have said it before, and I shall say it again.

Exams are not fair. A few weeks ago I had a two hour English language exam followed by a two hour graphics exam! And the sciences, oh dear! "Explain what a 100 per cent atom economy is."

"Give the meaning of an accurate titration."

"Use ideas about energy convection to explain how stars emit energy."

Of course, this is just general knowledge. You see it all the time, when someone faints in the street and somebody shouts, "It's okay, I'm a doctor of maths!"

The exam invigilators pass you round bottled water, taking off the labels beforehand. As if the answers are going to be on a Celtic Spring water bottle! Although now, thankfully, I have left school, or should I say prison.

I am probably the only person in my year group who thought the five years of secondary school seemed like five hundred.

TROUBLE AT THE CINEMA

In other news, another thing that has me annoyed has got to be this whole age thing. Having got on the train en route to Oxford, to see a film at the cinema, we were all told we looked far too old to buy a child train ticket!

Now I turned 16 in February, and yes, fair enough. However, arriving at the cinema to find that we all looked too young to see an age 15 film was just ridiculous. We should probably have bought ID, (Most of my friends did, hence I got venomous looks for the rest of the day) but still, why should I have to risk losing my passport?

"It is of legal requirement to ID somebody going to see an age 15 film, if they look under 17". Again, Rosstifically, if you look under 15, then you should be ID'd to see an age 15 film.

But I guess that's law, and instead we saw Men in Black III, which on the bright side of things was pretty good. All that we need now is some nice weather—then we'll all be sorted for a nice summer I reckon!

www.story-lab.org.uk

Go for Gold this summer at your local library!

FROM 14 July until 15 September children across Oxfordshire are being invited to go on a reading journey across the globe to recover three lost items, needed to help Professor Cortex boost the imagination of the Story Lab.

Are you ready to go on this exciting adventure with Lex, Rani, Will, Evie and Aesop the cat? All you have to do is collect your Story Lab 3-D model from your local library. During your exciting journey collect stickers and prizes as you read, making your way to the Olympic Park for your Gold medal!

Look out for fantastic new books, exciting puzzles and fun activities at the library too! There is also a brilliant interactive website which you can find at www.story-lab.org.uk

Explore Learning will be hosting a creative workshop based on the stories and character of Horrid Henry. This is a free activity on Thursday 9 August, 2.30pm–3.30pm for ages 5–11.

Booking is essential as places are limited.

For further details of this and any other activities happening please contact the library.

Blackbird Leys Library:
Tel 01865 770403

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
Working for you

TEMPLARS SQUARE
www.templarssquare.com
Shopping Centre
Shopping at the heart of your community
Visit us at www.templarssquare.com,
register for our newsletter or join us on Facebook

Students showcase work

YEAR 9 and 10 drama students from The Oxford Academy put on a performance about local hidden history at the Pegasus Theatre in Oxford.

The performance was the amalgamation of nine weeks after-school work with a professional drama practitioner which gave students experience of working as drama professionals as well as the opportunity to showcase their work. Twenty students took part in a devised scripted production about a story they had researched in their local area. This combined to create a piece about a local figure known by the community as Ferral and Littlemore Mental hospital.

There were no main characters in the performance as the students played an exaggerated version of themselves. This is known in stage language as an ensemble piece of Meta-Theatre.

Jay Jones, Academy Drama teacher said the show was full of energy and students demonstrated an excellent degree of professional awareness.

The full-house audience was made up of parents, members of the public, theatre staff, and teachers from participating schools as well as considerable support from student peers.

Mad Hatter's Tea Party for Grown-Ups

The Study, The Living Room, Justice Walk, Oxford Castle Quarter Friday 6 July. 7pm–2am. FREE ENTRY

STEP through the looking glass and make like a Mad Hatter at a tea party strictly for grown-ups in the Living Room's stylish Study. Come in Alice in Wonderland fancy dress and enjoy the Alice-inspired cocktail and canapé menu whilst enjoying glimpses of Alice-inspired film screenings...

Tickets are required for this event, however, it is free to attend. Call The Living Room on 01865 260210.

www.thelivingroom.co.uk/location/oxford
www.storymuseum.org.uk/alice

Art helps with study for Academy students

YEAR 7 students at the Oxford Academy had the opportunity to work with professional artist, Miranda Creswell, at the Modern Art Oxford gallery as part of a research project.

The project looked at how an art gallery, artist and school partnership could influence Year 7 pupils' ability to learn effectively, and is being conducted and funded by Oxford Brookes University.

The aim of this project is to explore how talking with an artist when making art work helps pupils develop language skills, such as explaining choices made during the workshop. Miranda Creswell focused on the work of British artist, Shezad Dawood.

Workshop activities included looking at Shezad's current exhibition; Piercing Brightness and watching two short films as well as discussing the symbolism of work in relation to films and taking part in a practical activity called 11.30am on a Sunday morning.

The last activity involved students drawing images to represent the types of things someone they know would be doing at 11.30am on a Sunday. These images were then collated and overlaid with film gels.

The study will help researcher Rachel Payne understand how artist partnerships with schools can support and develop the quality of pupils' learning, not just in art but in a wide range of subjects by developing language skills.

The results of the report will hopefully contribute to national debate about education policy and may be published as a journal article and presented at conferences about art and gallery education.

Craft Corner

with Jane Yates

Mirror in the bathroom

HAVE you discovered the Orinoco the scrap store yet?

I love going there, they rescue paint and other things from going into landfill and sell it cheaply. The staff who are mostly volunteers are always friendly and helpful. Orinoco is next to the Bullingdon Community Centre at the end of Peat Moors (off the Slade). www.oxorinoco.org.

For this project you will need:
Small wood effect mirror, gold paint and tub of fix and grout. All £1 each from The Pound Shop.
Assorted second hand bathroom tiles. £2 from Orinoco.

This has been my first attempt at tiling; I watched a couple of YouTube films and thought I would give it a go. First measure the area you want to put your mirror onto, then spread some fix and grout onto a clean surface. I made a spreader out of an old shop loyalty card.

Then place the mirror and the tiles on the surface pushing them

firmly into place. Leave the tiles to dry for a day, then use the fix and grout to fill in the gaps between the tiles. Wipe clean. Lightly sand the wood effect mirror frame and lightly paint using the gold paint.

Go for gold this summer and get reading!

Library staff Jonathan Eaton and Anita Parsler are looking forward to welcoming lots of young readers to Blackbird Leys Library over the summer holidays as part of the Story Lab project.

A MAJOR project to encourage children across the Leys to read more books launches on 14 July.

Running until 15 September the Story Lab project will also be available to children across Oxfordshire. Young readers are being invited to go on a reading journey across the globe to recover three lost items needed to help Professor Cortex boost the imagination of the Story Lab.

It is hoped that the project will encourage parents to read more with their children and make better use of the county's library services.

Debbie Walker, Library Manager for Blackbird Leys and Cowley Libraries, said: "The Library service is a wonderful free resource that is available to everyone. You are never too young to join the library, one of our members became a member only a few days after her birth. There are no library fines on books for under fives and we don't charge for accidental damage to books, in the hope that this removes some of the reasons why people may think that children are too young to join."

Young readers who take part will have the chance to go on an exciting adventure with Lex, Rani, Will, Evie and Aesop the cat.

Debbie added: "All children have to do is collect their Story Lab 3-D model from their local library. During their exciting journey readers can collect stickers and prizes as they read, making their way to the Olympic Park for their gold medal. There will be some fantastic new books, exciting puzzles and fun activities at the library too."

There is also an interactive website for the project at www.story-lab.org.uk

Debbie added that reading with your child should not be forgotten in our digital age, and is as important as ever. She said: "Reading is a great way to bond with your child by sharing a story, having a cuddle and building a routine of enjoying a story. The nicest thing we see are parents or carers taking the time to sit with their child and choose different books by reading to them and engaging the child with the story.

"It can certainly help with their learning and development and give them a head start before more formal learning, and you can take a book anywhere with you and you don't need a plug or charger to enjoy it. The great thing about the Library is the access to the whole of the county stock not just what we have in Blackbird Leys. Your membership is like a golden ticket to a whole new world of fun, facts, and imagination. It's free and easy to join.

"The summer reading challenge is a great way to encourage children to read, and you get prizes along the way to keep you going. There is the website for more ideas and we will have activity sheets throughout the summer. This year we hope to increase the number of children finishing the scheme by holding a medal ceremony in September."

Explore Learning will be hosting a creative workshop based on the stories and character of Horrid Henry. This is a free activity on Thursday 9 August 2.30pm–3.30pm children aged from 5–11. Booking is essential as places are limited.

For further details of this and any other activities happening please contact the Blackbird Leys Library on 01865 770403

Life begins at 50!

Leys News community journalist Jane Yates recently celebrated the big five oh! Here are her plans for the next year.

I TURNED 50 recently and I have made a promise to myself to do more exciting things in my life. I am not doing much at the moment, I have a part time job and in my spare time I paint and garden, but that's it really, no excitement.

In a typical day, I get up go to work come back, walk the dogs, cook, clean, watch TV and go to bed. I guess like a lot of people I worry about the bills and save for a holiday every couple of years. But all that's about to change, no more sad sack or excuses I am going to try and live life to the full, I may be ten years too late, for as the saying goes life begins at 40 but I hope to prove life really can change with a bit of effort, imitation and a limited budget.

I have set myself one rule, if I start something new I have to stick at it where possible, for the whole year right up until my next birthday. Some things will be one off experiences, so I won't be able to keep up but the majority of things I start I am determined to carry on.

For my first new experience I learned how to play poker, well Mexican hang all poker to be precise. Luckily my daughter's piano teacher, Chris, is a semi-professional poker player, and for the trade of a take away curry was happy to show us how to play. Chris brought around his poker set which had cards and plastic chips. The rules were not that hard and my daughter appeared to be a natural and I quickly lost everything. Luckily it was not real money. I intend to play at least one professional low stakes game at the end of the year but I definitely need to practise more before then!

A couple of friends came around one evening, who had never played poker and we played a few hands. Not having any poker chips, I improvised and used chocolates individually wrapped up instead. However it was much harder to lose the chocolate than the plastic chips and I found my concentration wavering the more I lost. I gave up when I was down to the last five and ate them. Apart from losing yet again, the game was good considering we had only just learned it; I only had to phone Chris once to check on a hand.

Next week I plan to go to London with a friend and learn how to lassoe a horse or some kind of mammal! Possibly a cow and knife throwing.

A NEW HOME FOR BUSTER

BY JANE YATES

A FEW weeks ago we had a new arrival in our family; a springer spaniel called Buster a rescue dog. At first Buster appeared very scared and spent all of his time sat by the door, and our other spaniel, Mandy, better known as fat spaniel in the cartoons for this paper, kept a fair distance. She had been an only dog and was not sure about this male newcomer, especially as he had taken all of her toys out into the garden and christened them. Within the first week we took Buster to our vet for a check-up as he walked funnily. The vet from The Animal Hospital on the Cowley Road, gave him a good examination and said he was underweight and that his muscles where very weak from lack of exercise.

The good news was that with regular meals and walks Buster would recover completely. By his next check up at the vet two weeks later, he had put on three pounds and was already walking much better, but most importantly Buster had made friends with our other dog Mandy.

It has been an interesting three weeks with the dogs, Mandy was definitely in charge, but also mothered Buster. Buster's energy had grown and he raced around the garden and had become fascinated by the guinea pig, who is used to spaniels so took no notice.

Buster has settled in so well he has started to guard the house, barking fearlessly at the church lady who called around with a fund raising leaflet yesterday.

Buster appears very happy in his new home and we love him already, if you would like to home a dog, please visit the Blue Cross Centre in Burford.

You can even virtually visit by going to their website www.bluecross.org.uk and checking out the featured pets, or searching under the type of pet you would like.

If you find a dog you like the look of on their website you can enquire about adopting or sponsoring that dog. Sarah, the Editor of Leys News also adopted her dog Jack, the cake eating, poncho stealing Labrador, who also appears in the fat spaniel cartoon. Yes all those cartoon stories are true!

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Thanks to Oxford Brookes University for sponsoring this page. If you are interested in studying at Oxford Brookes please call Sobia Afridi on 01865 484886

Leys Learning

BUSINESS IS ADDING UP FOR STUDENTS

TOP maths students from The Oxford Academy visited Oxford Science Park to find out how leading global real estate service provider, Savills, use maths every day to run their business.

The Open Industry visit, organised by Martin Dines from EDT and Andrew Parker of Savills, gave 20 students an insight into the local company, got them to explore a hands-on team activity which involved finding premises for fictitious companies and gave them an opportunity to talk to company staff about job opportunities and aspirations.

Students worked in teams of five on a brief to find premises for fictitious companies. The company information such as number of employees and type of industry varied and students had to make some pre-visit calculations with regard to their premise requirements.

The students then visited three offices on the science park; Hinshelwood, Northbrook and Fletcher Houses. For two of the offices, students received the measurements, costs and brochures. The final visit required the students to calculate a valuation through a hands-on measurement exercise using laser measurement equipment and variables such as service charges and rates.

Teams then had to choose the office that their company would like to occupy based on cost effectiveness and other criteria introduced on the day and present their findings to the other groups. The day concluded with a talk from Savills graduates about their career history and ambitions.

Andrew Parker, Director of Industrial and Logistics at Savills, said: "I was impressed by the behaviour and questions from Academy students". In particular student Ryan Clune bartered with Andrew to try and reduce costs.

Another student, Jade Bennett, demonstrated that she had even read the brochure small print with her knowledgeable question.

Academy Maths teacher Ashley Colbourne coordinated this event to help students understand the link between their learning and how it can apply in the real world.

News from BLITZ

IT courses still FREE with Blitz!

Would you like to improve your IT skills?

Would you like to improve your work prospects?

Would you like help to get a Job?

If yes then phone now to find out about our courses.

DROP IN TIMES:
(FREE access to the internet for all adults)

Monday: 12.30–3.00pm
Tuesday: 12.30–3.00pm
Friday: 12.30–3.00pm

Do you want to help your community?

BLITZ is currently looking for voluntary teaching assistants with basic IT skills

For more information call 01865 714492

Blackbird Leys IT Hub
Leys Linx Centre, Blackbird Leys Community Centre

COURSES, WORKSHOPS AND OPPORTUNITES

Teacher Taster Course
3–5 October

A three day course aimed at graduates in secondary shortage subjects such as Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Design Technology, Information Technology, English and Modern languages. Also aimed at helping male graduates into primary schools.

The course is designed to help you decide whether to apply for initial teacher training.

For details email teaching.enquires@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call 01865 797397

Oxfordshire Adult Learning

Help develop existing skills, discover new talents, as well as providing motivation and encouragement to achieve personal goals.

- **For general enquiries call 01865 797474**
- **Able Centre** (Adult Learning). Free courses at the Blackbird Leys Library in Maths and English (ages 16+). For more information call Nicky Williams on 01865 728688
- **Adults with learning disabilities (ALD).** Call 01865 779584
- **Course enquiries and enrolments.** Call 0845 351 0646
- **English classes for speakers of other languages (ESOL).** Call 01865 727148

Open Days at Ruskin College

If you are interested in applying for a long course at Ruskin College see what's in store for you by attending one of their Open Days. Attending an Open Day will help you to make a fully informed decision on whether you would like to apply for a place at Ruskin College.

During an Open Day you will follow a programme of events that will allow you to find out about the College, talk to the tutors who teach on the course you are interested in, speak to current students to find out "what it is really like to be a Ruskin student!" and look round the Walton Street site.

The next two Open Days are:
Saturday 30 June, 11am–2pm
Wednesday 1 August, 11am–1pm

www.ruskin.ac.uk
01865 759600
enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk

Ethnic Minority Business Services

Tyndale House, 134b Cowley Road.
EMBS provides training for the unemployed, learning services for both adults and young people (ages 16–18) and business courses for local businesses. Call 07865 794431

Experimental Drawing Workshop at Modern Art Oxford
Thursday 19 July

Workshops are open to all. Paper will be provided; please bring your own pencils. £7.00 and £5.00. Must book by 19 July. For more details email info@modernartoxford.org.uk or call 01865 813800
www.modernartoxford.org.uk

Your local representatives

Parish Council

Chairman: Gordon Roper;
Vice Chair: Brian Lester;
Non-position holders: Tanya Prescott, Chris Hatton, Cyril Martin, Mrs Ann Booker, Mrs Sheila Smith, Pat Stannard, Rae Humberstone (*see City Council section below*), Gerry Webb

For further details telephone 01865 716943 during office hours of 9am–5pm, Monday to Friday. Send mail to Parish Council, 13 Bailey Road, Oxford, OX4 3HU.

Also check leysonline.net to find out about Parish Council Meetings.

Oxford City Council

Blackbird Leys Ward

Val Smith – *Labour*
4 Flaxfield Road, OX4 6QD
☎ 07767 446051
valsmith@gmail.com
or cllrvsmith@oxford.gov.uk
(*her city councillor entry*)

Rae Humberstone – *Labour*
75 Little Bury, Blackbird Leys
☎ 01865 779678
cllrhumberstone@oxford.gov.uks

Val Smith and Rae Humberstone will be doing street surgeries every other week. They can also visit people in their homes – ring or email to make arrangements.

Northfield Brook Ward

Steve Curran – *Labour*
88 Fairacres Road, Oxford, OX4 1TG
☎ 07941 785538
StephenCurran55@yahoo.co.uk

Scott Seamons – *Labour*
2 Orchard Court Rose Hill
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☎ 07910 595047
cllrsseamons@oxford.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council

Leys & Lye Division

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Richard Stevens – *Labour*
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Member of Parliament

Member of Parliament for Oxford East

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☎ 01865 595790
andrewsmith.mp@virgin.net

Surgery: Every third Friday at the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre from 3.00pm

What's on in the Leys

A quick guide to what's available locally. If you have a service or event you'd like to include, please ring 01865 711756

ADVICE

Agnes Smith Advice Centre
Gives free independent and impartial advice.
Drop-in sessions are in the centre on Mondays 2.00–4.00pm and Fridays 10.00am–12.00pm. Also in the Farmhouse on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am–12pm.
☎ 01865 770206

CHILDREN

Teenage Rounders Class
Tuesdays, 4.00–5.00pm
£1.20.
For 14–18 year olds
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

Breastfeeding Café
Mondays, 1.00pm–2.00pm at Leys Children's Centre, Cuddesdon Corner.
☎ Camille, 0789 995 8316

Blackbird Leys Youth Centre
Blackbird Leys Road. Variety of activities and advice for young people. ☎ 01865 772886.

Brownies:
Thurs, Holy Family Church Hall.
☎ Jennifer Pleass 07886 757338.

Dovecote Afterschool Club
Mondays–Thursdays, 3.15pm–5.00pm, £1.30 per session.
☎ 01865 712299

Maluchy group
for Polish speaking families with children ages 0 to 5 years. Saturday, 10.00am–11.30am, at Pegasus School.
☎ Agata, 07874 187 704

35th Oxford Scout Group
☎ Duncan Bowler, 0776 6293353
duncan@35thoxford.com

Leys Kiddie Club
Mon, Tue, Thur and Fri, 9.30am–2.30pm, at Dovecote Family Drop-in Room. £1.

Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Battalion Army Cadet Force
Thursdays, 7.30–9.30p at Sandy Lane West. Boys and girls ages 13 to 18.
☎ 01869 259681

Mother and Toddler Bounce
Trampoline Sessions suitable for mothers and toddlers held on Thursdays, 10.30–11.30am. Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.
☎ Fiona, 07891 419793

Strawbery Fayre Majorettes
Training every Wednesday at the Barn in Nightingale Avenue, Greater Leys, 7.00–9.15pm. Taking on new members any time of the year.
☎ Eleen Filer 01865 717781

Rainbows
For girls aged 5 to 7.
Fridays during term time, 5.30–6.30pm, at the Holy Family Church Hall on Cuddesdon Way.
☎Alexandra, 07804 500313.

EDUCATION

Blackbird Leys Library
Cuddesdon Way, Opposite Top Shops.

Books, DVDs, audio books, use of computers for adults and children, photocopying, reading group, holiday activities.

Opening times:
Mon, Wed, Thur: 9am–12pm and 1.30–5pm
Tue: 9am–12pm
Sat: 9.30am–12.30pm
Friday Closed

Able Centre
Free courses in Maths and English.
☎ Nicky, 01865 728688

Blitz IT Courses
IT for beginners, internet, email, file management, PC maintenance and more.
☎ 01865 714492

LEISURE

Irish dancing.
Sacred Heart Hall. Weds and Thurs, 5pm.

Boxing Club.
Tues and Thurs 7.30–9.00pm, at Youth Centre, Blackbird Leys Road.
☎ Tony Gibson, 01865 432995

Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool
Blackbird Leys Road.
General swimming times are:
Mon & Fri, 5.45–6.45pm;
Sat & Sun, 11.15am–1.00pm, & 1.30–2.30pm
Prime Time for over 50s:
Mon, 12–1.00pm;
Wed, 11.30–12.30pm
Water Workout:
Tue and Fri, 12–1.00pm
Slimming World
Thurs, 12–1.00pm
☎ 01865 467040

BBL Leisure Centre
Zumba:
Mondays, 10.30–11.30am
Body Balance:
Tuesdays, 11.00–12.00pm
Legs, Bums, Tums:
Wednesdays, 10.15–11.15am
Body Pump:
Thursdays, 9.30–10.30am
Pilates:
Thursdays, 10.30–11.30am
Boxercise:
Fridays, 10.30–11.30am
Overs 50s indoor cycling:
Mondays, 11.30–12.15pm
☎ 01865 467020

OLDER PEOPLE

Prime Time Over 50s group
Wednesdays, 10.30am - 3.30pm, at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre,
Pegasus Road (£1.50). Keep fit, bingo, indoor bowls, speakers, activities and trips.
☎ 07534 740589

Golden Circle
☎ Bernard Tucker, 460592

Silver Circle
☎ 435954 (Blackbird Leys Community Centre)

The Clockhouse
see box on opposite page

Monday lunch club
☎ Anne Appleton, 422231

Leys Community Church Over 60s Club
Wednesday afternoons.
☎ Keith Templar, 715815

Grandparents' Stay & Play
Bring your grandchildren to the Leys Childrens Centre drop-in, specially for grandparents. Weds 1–3 pm at the Dovecote.

WELLBEING

Skiptrix Fitness Class
Get fit, tone and lose weight.
Thursdays, 6.30–7.15pm at the Ark T Centre, Cowley.
Satudays, 10–10.45am at the Barn, BBLeys. £4.00 per class.
☎ Trish, 07957754355
trishwisdom@yahoo.co.uk

Slimming World
Thursdays, 5.15pm and 7.00pm, Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road.
☎ Gill, 01865 730009

CLASSIFIEDS

Reach new customers in your local area with a Leys News Classified ad. Advertise your business from as little as £10 per issue (when booking for 12 months). To book your space ring John on 01865 711756

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www.hawtin-electrical.co.uk
☎ 07811 401279

Calvin Pennant
71 Long Lane, Oxford OX4 3TN
☎ 07960 328170

CLEANING

Solo Assist Domestic Cleaning Services (including end of tenancy). ☎ Marilyn on 01865 308067 or 07990 630332

CARERS

Acquire Care
Oxford Science Park, OX4 4GP
Tel: 01865 338050

COMPUTERS

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Broadband and wireless setup, speed up your computer and health checks, anti-virus support, Microsoft Windows re-installation and upgrades, data backup solutions.
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☎ 01865 469069
& 07884 318 464
efaria@gmx.co.uk

FAST/TAKEAWAY FOOD

Chillies Indian Cuisine
Dunnock Way, OX4 7EX
☎ 01865 775849

Dominos Pizza
57 Between Towns Rd, OX4 3LR
☎ 01865 777137

Papa John's Pizza
80 Rose Hill, Oxford, OX4 4HS
☎ 01865 402050

Pizza Hut
3 Courtlands Rd, Rose Hill, OX4 4HS
☎ 01865 236116

Pizza Polo
34 Cowley Rd, Littlemore OX4 4LD
☎ 01865 425630

FLORISTS

Joe Austin
174 Cowley Road, OX4 6NQ
☎ 01865 792037

The Garden
99-100 The Market, OX1 3YD
☎ 01865 240709

GARDENS

Female Gardener
Weeding, watering, planting, and trimming at reasonable rates.
☎ 07788933891

Acorn Nursery
Stadhamptom, Oxford
☎ 01865 891663

Oxford Garden Centres
South Hinksey, OX1 5AR
☎ 01865 326066

Pathway Workshop
Dunnock Way, OX4 7EF
☎ 01865 714111

Wyevale Garden Centre
Suthern-By-Pass, Oxford
☎ 01865 326066

JOBS

Start your own business with Neals Yard Remedies. For more info call Katie 395960
kches2001@yahoo.com

HEALTH & BEAUTY

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The Ozone Health and Fitness Club,Kassam Stadium
☎ 01865 335300
www.batheinbeauty.co.uk

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phyllidachappell@yahoo.com
www.holistictherapistoxford.co.uk
Neal's Yard Remedies
☎ *01865 203544*

HAIRDRESSERS

Hair & Body Shop
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☎ Jenny, 01865 776777 & 07501 787 123

PLUMBERS

Long Brothers
25 Eastern Ave, OX4 4QS
☎ 01865 597064

Safe Heating & Plumbing
37 Druce Way, OX4 6TJ
☎ 01865 772303

TAXIS

ABC
70A Hollow Way, OX4 2NH
☎ 01865 597029

Air Link Oxford
24 Vicarage Close, OX4 2NH
☎ 01865 434040

Oxford Cars
Regus, 7200 The Quorum, OX4 21Z ☎ 01865 406070

WINDOW CLEANERS

MRF
37 Green Hill, OX4 7UD
☎ 01865 599812

Taylors Windows
Greater Leys
☎ 01865 773486

Men's Group
Join us for a regular end of day in a relaxed and friendly environment. Learn stress management tools and use this space to talk with other men and organise activities together.
Wednesdays, 5.30–8.00pm
Cowley Wellbeing Centre
26 Between Towns Road
☎ Duncan / Lanre
07435 760 809
01865 749998

The Listening Centre
A counselling service for Blackbird Leys and Oxford. Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre.
☎ 01865 794794

Survivors
Fridays and Saturdays, Blackbird Leys Community Centre.
9.30am – 3.30pm.
All welcome.

A self-help group of people who use or have used Mental Health Services, working together to get support for, to share experiences and to press for greater awareness of the needs of survivors.

Lunch available for £1. Pudding 50p. Breakfast from 50p. Card making. Table top sales.
☎ 07729 581975

Yoga For All
Experienced Yoga teacher, starting a new class.
☎ Linda Highland on 01865 432570

NETWORKING

Leys WI
Meets at the Clockhouse on the first Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm.
☎ To find out more call Rachel Fisher on 07528 433199
www.theleyswi.moonfruit.com

Women's Community Business Network
Open to all women who have a business or are interested in finding out more about starting one. Speaker plus networking.
Meets second Tuesday of each month 7.30–9pm at the Jack Argent room, Leys Community Centre. £3
☎ Katie, 01865 395960
womenscommunitybusiness@yahoo.co.uk
www.womens-business-network.co.uk

If you have a service or event you'd like to include, please ring 01865 711756.

Diary Dates

Thursday 5 July
SLIGO Summer Party.
See box below.

Friday 6 July
Registration day for Dovecote Afloat and the Dovecote Summer Playscheme. Call Carol on 01865 712299

Monday 9 July
Olympic Torch comes to Blackbird Leys.
See backpage

Monday 16 July
Production meeting for Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat.
See page 2

Monday 16 July
Closing date for Oxford in Bloom.

Tuesday 31 July
Parish Council meeting Jack Argent Room, 7.00pm. Call 01865 716943 for details

Wednesday 25 July
CLANG social evening.
See box below

Active Women

Active Women is a recently launched project co-ordinated by the Oxfordshire Sports Partnership which encourages more women in Oxfordshire to take part in sport.

Badminton at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

Mondays, 8–10pm (*mixed adult session*) £5.50 per session.

Tuesdays, 10–11am (*women only session*) £3.20 per session (£1.20 for Fusion members)

Tuesdays, 7–8pm (*family session*) £3.20 adults and £2.20 children

Wednesdays, 10.00am–11.30am (*50+ session*) £2.50 per session.

Wednesdays, 7– 9pm (*mixed adult session*) £5.50 per session.

Badminton at Oxford Spires Academy

Tuesdays, 7–8pm
Oxford Spires Academy,
Glanville Road
Cowley, OX4 2AU
£3.50 per session.
(*No sessions 5 June*)

Badminton at Oxford Academy

Thursdays,
7.30–8.30pm
The Oxford Academy,
Sandy Lane West,
Littlemore, OX4 6JZ
£3.50 per session

Trampoline at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre
Mondays, 6.30pm–7.30pm.
Runs six weeks. £27 or £5.60 per session

Netball at Oxford Academy

Tuesdays, 8–9pm
The Oxford Academy,
Sandy Lane West,
Littlemore, OX4 6JZ
£3.50 per session

Netball at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

Sundays, 5–6pm
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre,Pegasus Road,
Blackbird Leys, Oxford ,
OX4 6JL
£3.20 per session

Football at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre

Thursdays, 6.30–7.30pm
Blackbird Leys Playing Field, by the Leisure Centre, Oxford, OX4 6JL
£2.50 per session.

For more info: Natasha Mighty 467264 / Natasha.Mighty@fusion-lifestyle.com
www.getoxfordshireactive.org

Clockhouse Community Centre

Our sessions are either low-cost or free, and all Leys over 50s are very welcome! Call Sally Meachim on 01865 395908 for dates and details.

Long Ground, Greater Leys OX4 7FX. ☎ 01865 395908 **E:** clockhousecdi@btconnect.com

Over 50s advice
FREE monthly, confidential, advice on benefits, debt, housing and consumer issues. Outreach session at the Clockhouse, by Agnes Smith Advice Centre. To book an appointment call 395908. Next dates: Monday 30 July, 10am–12pm. 12–12.30pm on the same day is a drop-in, so no appointment needed for this slot.)

Games Club for over 50s
Do you enjoy board games like scrabble and dominoes? Try this friendly club at the Clockhouse. Drink/biscuits included. Mondays 2 and 9 July, 1.30–3.30pm. (Then summer break). £1.

Line dancing for over 50s
Monthly dances at the Clockhouse. No partner needed, beginners very welcome. Good exercise, great fun! Next one: 16 July, 1.30–3.00pm. £2.

Yoga for over 50s
Seated/standing exercise, and relaxation. Improve your flexibility, feel calm and refreshed. Tuesdays, 10–11am. (Weekly to 17 July, then summer break.) £2.

Singing for fun for over 50s
No pressure, or reading music, just relax and enjoy singing in good company. Think you can't sing? We bet you can! Tuesdays, 1.30–3.30pm. (Weekly to 17 July, then summer break.) FREE.

Crafts group for over 50s
Wednesdays, 11am–12.30pm. Bring your knitting, crochet, or sewing and have a natter. Beginners very welcome. £1

Tai chi for over 50s
Seated and standing exercise to help you get more supple, and boost your energy. Thursdays, 10–11 am. (Weekly to 19 July, then summer break.). £2

Gardening Club
Monthly meeting of SLIGO (Senior Leys Independent Gardening Organisation), first Thursday of each month, at 2pm. £2 per meeting. Adults of all ages very welcome.

Thursday 5 July: **Summer Party.** Please bring food to share. SLIGO also has regular work parties in the Clockhouse community garden.
Tuesday 3 July: **Coach Day Trip to RHS Wisley Gardens.** Cost: £15 (non-members), £12 (members). Currently fully booked but for waiting list/cancellations please call 771613 or 395908.

Computer courses for over 50s
Learn at your own pace with the Clockhouse IT Project Group. Complete beginners very welcome. Learn how to improve your digital photography skills, or how to make DVDs and calendars. £1 per session. Tel: 395908

Evening activities group
Clockhouse Activity Nights Group (CLANG). Join the CLANGers at our friendly monthly socials. Meet others, relax, chat, and make new friends. ADULTS OF ALL AGES WELCOME! The next Evening Social is on Wednesday 25 July, 7.00–9.00pm. £2 (includes refreshments). For more details call 395908

Samba Dance for over 50s
Oxford City Council class. Mondays, 10–11am (until 9 July). All abilities. No experience needed. Drop-in class. All over 50s welcome. £2.50

LOCAL CHURCHES

The Church of the Holy Family
Eucharist: Every Sunday, 10am, with children's activities.
Timeout: Reflective worship. Most Sundays, 6.30pm.
Church Office Hour: Mondays (except bank holidays) at 6.30–7.30pm. For hall bookings, wedding arrangements and enquiries.
Fellowship for Bible: Study, discussion and prayer. Most Wednesdays at 7.30pm.
☎ Revd Heather Carter 01865 778728
Rev Adam Stevenson, 01865 714163
www.holyfamilybbl.co.uk

Redeem Christian Church of God
Meets at the Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road.
Sunday Service: 3–6.00pm
Bible study on Fridays: 7–8pm, except last Friday of month.
☎ 07825 679044 and 01865 766056
www.RCCGLighthouse.co.uk

Leys Community Church
Meets on Sunday, 11am at the Oxford Academy, Beecroft Room (includes special activities for children and young people).
☎ Chipper and Anna Betts, 07985 982804

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys
Sunday Masses: 9.30am, with music and children's liturgy; and at 6.00pm. ☎ 01865 776903

Chrisco Ministries
Meets in Jack Agent Hall at the BBL Community Centre.
Sunday Service: 11am–2pm
☎ 07533 845714 and 07737 564677

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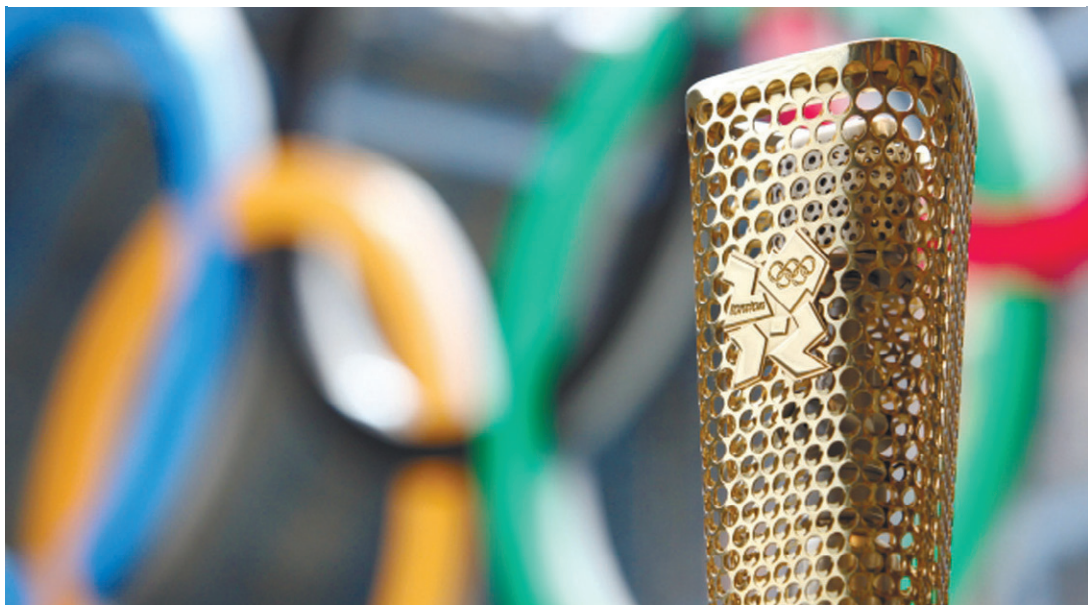
NAPIT
GAS safe REGISTER

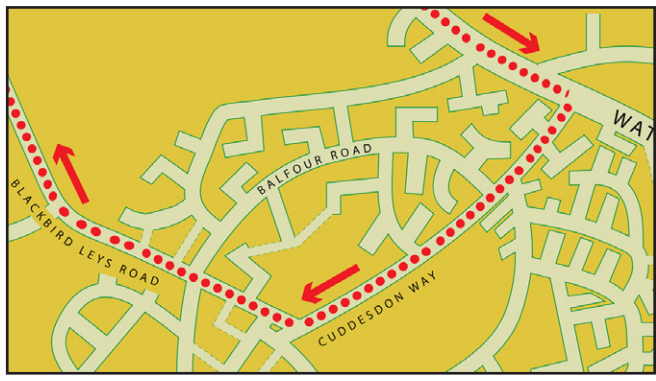
OLYMPICS COMES TO THE LEYS MONDAY 9 JULY



THE LONDON 2012 Olympic Torch will travel through Blackbird Leys on its way to the capital to mark the start of this year's games. On Monday 9 July people in Blackbird Leys, Cowley Road, and St Clement's will be able to watch the Olympic Flame as it travels through Oxford, and celebrate the achievements of the inspirational Torchbearers who have been specially chosen to take part in the historic event. Aferwards celebrations and family fun will be had at South Park, including a spectacular performance of the Tree of Light.

For any enquiries please email olympicenquiries@oxford.gov.uk

Route details:
5.33pm BMW Assembly Plant exit lane
5.33pm B480 Watlington Road
5.39pm Cuddeston Way
5.47pm Blackbird Leys Road
5.55pm Barns Road
6:11pm B480 Cowley Road
6:32pm A420 St Clement's Street
6:46pm South Park Celebration Stage



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Oxford United, The Kassam Stadium, Blackbird Leys

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